Tolson
Mohr
Parsons
Belmont
Callahan
DeLoach
Malone
McGuire
Rosen
Tamm
Trotter
W.C. Sullivan
Tele. Room
Ingram
Gandy

THE CASE OF THE U-2: STORY OF U.S. ESPIONAGE

MANY TOOLS

Aerial Surveys Play a Large Part

By HANSON W. BALDWIN

The secret world of spies and espionage dominated diplomacy last week, and cast a long shadow over the summit meeting. The men who ordinarily lurk in the back alleys of international politics were suddenly headlined on the world's front pages when an American high-flying reconnaissance plane was downed over the heart of Russia.

The incident of the downed U-2 focused attention on the United States intelligence system and posed a number of questions.

*

Why was an American reconnaissance plane over the heart of Soviet Russia? What part does aerial reconnaissance play in the entire intelligence collection process?

The Lockheed U-2's flight was part of a global United States intelligence-gathering mechanism intended to penetrate the Iron Curtain of secrecy that shrouds the Soviet heartland and that has increased tremendously the military danger of surprise attack to the United States in the atomic age. The U-2 reconnaissance expeditions were justified by the President and by Secretary of State Herter as essential to preserve the free world against a nuclear Pearl Harbor.

Timing of Interest

The timing of the flight of the downed U-2 on May 1, shortly before the summit conference, was not discussed publicly by the President. But the date of the incident was May Day, a holiday important in Soviet chronology, and the United States had anticipated for some time a Soviet space or missile-launching attempt prior to the conference. It is presumed, too, that the flight was made to check intelligence data collected by other means.

Aerial reconnaissance has played a major role in intelligence in actual war, but has never before played so important a role in a so-called time of peace as it has since World War II. This new emphasis upon its importance is, in part, due to products of the technological revolution: strip-mapping and infra-red cameras that can take pictures of clear definition from fifteen miles or more in the air; tape recorders that record radio transmissions and radar pulses, along with times of transmission and frequencies, and planes, like the U-2, with extraordinary capabilities in altitude, range and speed.

Prior Incidents

There have been many prior incidents in which United States planes, operating along or near Soviet frontiers, were shot down or damaged. These flights, especially the U-2 program, have provided information of tremendous value to the United States intelligence community. The U-2 program, in fact, was probably second only to so-called communications intelligence (recording of enemy radio and other communications) in importance, but it formed only a part of the whole vast mechanism of intelligence collection.

*

What was the U-2 program? Who directed it? Who flew the planes? Where were the planes based? How successful has it been?

The U-2 was designed in considerable secrecy about six years ago by Clarence L. ("Kelly") Johnson, a vice president of the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation. After a prototype had proved its amazing capabilities, an unknown number was built. Under the "cover plan" developed, the planes actually did some air sampling of the upper atmosphere (for radioactive particles after a nuclear explosion), and made weather recordings.

Some of the planes were under the contractual control of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, flown by civilian pilots hired by the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, and "managed" by special "weather" wings of the Air Force. Others are operated by the Air Force directly. The venture was thus a cooperative and joint one though probably no one in NASA knew of its secret aspects.

Guarded Secret

The actual air reconnaissance program over Russia was known to, and authorized by President Eisenhower himself and the National Security Council. The Central Intelligence Agency was the directing agency and provided the funds. The U-2 program had been known to a few key Congressmen and to others at the top in Washington for years, but the secret was closely guarded. Whether top officials in Washington knew ahead of time of the May 1 flight is unknown, but no orders from Washington, which closely controlled the over-all program, were sent to halt such "overflights" of Russia.

The U-2's operated from many parts of the world, ranging from Alaska and the Aleu-

b3
b7E

[redacted]

The Washington Post and Times Herald
The Washington Daily News
The Evening Star
New York Herald Tribune
New York Journal-American
New York Mirror
New York Daily News
New York Post
The New York Times
The Worker
The New Leader
The Wall Street Journal
Date MAY 15 1960

REC- 31

[redacted]

NOT RECORDED
46 MAY 17 1960

b3
b7E

62 MAY 19 1960

[redacted]

b3
b7E

tiane to Germany, North Africa and Turkey. Some of these bases were used for weather observation purposes and air samplings. To conduct penetrations of the Soviet air space, a U-2 might leave its normal base and fly to an advanced base to fill fuel tanks and get closer to its objective. Thus the planes based in Japan may have conducted only weather and air-sampling missions; Okinawa was probably a base used for "overflights."

Known to Russians

The U-2 program has been probably the most successful reconnaissance plane—and one of the most successful intelligence operations—in history. In four years or more it had "overflown" Russia many times. The Russians knew about some of these flights—in fact, Soviet aviation magazines mentioned the U-2 as long ago as 1958.

Most of these were probably "shallow" penetrations, up to 500 to 600 miles from the frontiers, but a considerable number were "deep," and some had involved long-range flights similar to the 3,600-mile south-north flight Pilot Powers was alleged to be engaged upon (from Peshawar, Pakistan, to Bodo, Norway) when his plane was downed. Prior to May 1, apparently between five and eight U-2's had been lost or crashed. Presumably these losses occurred outside Soviet borders. In any case, the Russians had never before recovered equipment or pilot.

Data procured by the planes have been of very great importance. Presumably Soviet missile launching sites near the Caspian and Aral Seas, Soviet nuclear detonations, Soviet airfields and other important military objectives have been photographed, and much data on Soviet electronic methods and capabilities recorded.

*

Why was Pilot Powers' U-2 lost?

Only the Russians and Pilot Powers can answer this one. The Russians have maintained that the U-2 was downed by Soviet antiaircraft rocket while flying near Sverdlovsk in the Urals at an altitude of about 65,000 feet or more. Later, a Soviet military paper quoted Powers as saying he thought his engine had failed. Both the President and Mr. Johnson have cast some doubt on the Soviet rocket claim, at least at the altitude claimed by Moscow. Some observers believe a mechanical or engine failure—loss of oxygen supply, or a "flame-out" of the jet engine—forced Powers to come down to lower altitudes where he would have been an easy target. There is no evidence, and no support in official circles, for the belief expressed by some that Powers' descent was deliberate—that he was a "double-agent," defector, or traitor.

Harvest of Evidence

On the other hand Powers himself was captured, with many instruments and much equipment. Large parts of the plane—probably enough for a Soviet copy to be made—were exhibited more or less intact in Moscow. The pilot did not, or could not, utilize the "self-destruct" mechanism which would have blown the plane to bits in the air, nor did he kill himself, although he carried with him ample means to do so.

The recovery of large parts of the U-2 (now acknowledged by Mr. Johnson from photographs shown him to look like his design), and of much equipment intact can be explained by the plane's very high glide ratio. If the pilot rode the plane down to lower altitudes and then jumped, the plane may have glided to a relatively slow crash.

Why the pilot survived only he can answer. The unwritten code of an espionage agent is to kill himself rather than to reveal information to the enemy. But Powers was a pilot first, an agent second; and pilots do not have a "self-destruct" philosophy. Undoubtedly the CIA hoped that both Powers and his plane would be destroyed rather than fall into Russian hands. The extreme psychological and, if necessary, physical torture which the Communists know so well how to administer could probably break down any man.

*

Have the Russians conducted aerial reconnaissance?

Yes, but nowhere near as much as we have done. The reasons are three. (1) The Russians do not face an "Iron Curtain"; aerial reconaissance has less importance to them than to us. (2) They have no bases close enough to the continental United States. (3) They have no plane like the high-flying U-2. Soviet planes have flown over the borders of Alaska, Northern Canada, Japan, Western Germany. But their penetrations have usually been very shallow, and rarely if ever in areas where missile batteries or modern interceptors were stationed.

*

What military deductions can be drawn from the U-2 program?

It would be a mistake to generalize too much on the basis of what is known. Neither the U-2 nor any other U. S. aircraft has "overflown" all of Russia. Nevertheless, it would appear that Soviet radar and anti-aircraft defenses had, until recently, no answer to the high-altitude aircraft. In fact, there is still some doubt about Soviet anti-aircraft rocket capabilities. This apparent defensive weakness, coupled with the data acquired by the U-2 and by other means, explains in part some of the confidence of the United States about our military strength relative to that of the Soviet Union. We know, obviously, a great deal more about Russian defenses than the general public realizes.

Involved Many Agencies

The U-2 case clearly involved both intelligence policy and national security policy, with many agencies of the Government participating. Yet the National Security Council, established by law to consider just this type of problem, does not appear to have been used effectively in this instance.

The U-2 incident seems to justify the recent inquiry by a Senate subcommittee headed by Senator Henry M. Jackson, Democrat of Washington, into the National Security Council and the whole system of government policy-making.

There remains the question of whether the Central Intelligence Agency is properly placed and properly supervised. During the debate that resulted in the National Security Act of 1947, the placement of the C. I. A. under the State Department was considered and rejected.

The reasons were, and are, good. If the State Department operated the nation's leading secret intelligence organization, either diplomacy or the collection and evaluation of intelligence would suffer. The two have so many incompatibles that to mix them in the same organization might be disastrous, just as it would be to have the State Department run the Pentagon.

The C. I. A. is properly placed as an independent agency, responsible to the President and to the National Security Council. But the National Security Council may not be exercising, as fully as it should, its function of policy control. And any secret intelligence agency, because it is naturally incompatible with some of the ideals of democratic government, requires careful top supervision.

The C. I. A. has an executive watchdog in a board established in 1956, in the executive office of the President. This board, headed by Gen. John E. Hull, retired, has access to the C. I. A. and other intelligence agencies. Its members — particularly its chairman — make frequent, though intermittent, inspections. The committee reports to the President.

It is questionable, however, whether this board meets the need for objective and continuous supervision. A Joint Congressional Committee of leading members of both houses of Congress would probably provide more thorough and ~~more detached evaluation~~.

U. S. AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE PLANE

Associated Press

The Lockheed U-2 is a unique, glider-like plane with very long, straight wings (a wingspan of 80 feet in contrast to a fuselage of 49 feet 7 inches). It is a light aircraft (with auxiliary tanks the weight is 17,270 pounds, with fuel). Its very low wing-loading and relatively high power, supplied by a Pratt & Whitney J 57 jet engine, give it remarkable performance characteristics. It can fly for long distances at a speed of about 500 miles an hour, at altitudes in excess of 70,000 feet. And it can glide, with power shut off, for scores of miles in a very gradual descent. The single-man plane is unarmed. But its cabin is crammed with cameras and instruments. For weather research purposes, the plane has carried instruments to measure cosmic rays, pressure, temperature and humidity, and a camera for pictures of cloud cover. It has been equipped with "sniffers"—sticky filters to pick up evidence of nuclear fall-out. For aerial reconnaissance its instruments might include various electronic devices to pick up radio and radar signals. But its chief instrument for espionage would be high-resolution, long-range aerial cameras that can photograph ground features in fantastic detail.

Post-Mortems on U-2

C. I. A. Is the Only Agency Relatively Untarnished by Show of Weaknesses

By HANSON W. BALDWIN

Post-mortems on the U-2 were still being held this week, and a balanced judgment will have to await the substantiating footnotes of time.

But the Senate's recent investigation, as well as facts available from other sources, have disclosed a pattern of policy-fumbling and some weaknesses in planning.

News Analysis

The Central Intelligence Agency has emerged relatively untarnished — though some questions affecting its reputation are still unanswered. But the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the State and Defense Departments, the National Security Council and the White House are all involved in what appears to have been a lack of policy-coordination at the top levels of the Government.

The two principal victims of the incident, besides the pilot, Francis Gary Powers, were the reconnaissance plane program, since suspended by the President, and the credibility of the United States Government. The faith of the United States and world public opinon in the truthfulness of United States Goverment spokesmen — though partly restored by the later acceptance by the President of full responsibility for the U-2 program — have certainly been badly shaken by what are now admitted to have been outright falsehoods.

White's Statement Noted

The Senate committee's inquiry disclosed that perhaps the most flagrant and inexcusable instance of unnecessary official falsehood was the indignant public assertion by Lincoln White, official State Department spokesman, that there had never been any deliberate attempt "to violate Soviet airspace."

Mr. White, who knew nothing of the U-2 flights over the Soviet Union, was permitted to make this statement at a time when the United States Embassy in Moscow already had reported "cocktail-circuit rumors" that an American U-2 pilot had been captured by the Russians.

An equally damaging fact adduced has been the apparent admission that there was no planning for the possible loss of a U-2 and pilot to the Russians. The Central Intelligence Agency was clearly charged with the top operational management of the program, and in this capacity undoubtedly prepared the original cover story, released by The National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

But Allen W. Dulles, the C. I. A. director, has been careful to draw a line between intelligence collection, analysis and evaluation, and the formulation of policy. He has tried to avoid the danger inherent in every secret intelligence operation — of being drawn into the partisan development of policy.

But the U-2 incident obviously required, after May 1, a policy decision that apparently was never contemplated until afterward. Mr. Dulles seems to have had clear control over the management and operational phase of the U-2 program, but where management stopped and policy began was obviously a shadowy margin. And policy control seems to have been so diffused that no one really assumed it.

Yet one of the fundamental purposes of the National Security Council is to assist the President in forming coordinated national security policies. The National Security Act of 1947, which established the National Security Council and the Central Intelligence Agency, provided that the council should "advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign and military policies relating to the national security."

It also said the council should consider "policies on matters of common interest to the departments and agencies of the Government concerned with the national security." The Central Intelligence Agency was charged with coordinating the intelligence activities of the Government and with advising the National Security Council in intelligence matters.

Later, an Operations Coordination Board was established under the National Security Council to monitor the ~~implementation~~ of policy decisions.

50 JUN 15 1960

REC- 66

Tolson
Mohr
Parsons
Belmont
Callahan
DeLoach
Malone
McGuire
Rosen
Tamm
Trotter
W.C. Sullivan
Tele. Room
Ingram
Gandy

b3
b7E

The Washington Post and Times Herald
The Washington Daily News
The Evening Star
New York Herald Tribune
New York Journal-American
New York Mirror
New York Daily News
New York Post
The New York Times
The Worker
The New Leader
The Wall Street Journal
Date JUN 1 5 1960

b3
b7E

NOT RECORDED
46 JUN 14 1960

b3
b7E

Bomber Controversy

The U-2 episode bears squarely on the military controversy about the continued utility of the piloted bomber. Premier Khrushchev has dismissed the bomber as obsolete and has publicly pinned his reliance upon rockets. There is no doubt that the missile will ultimately take over a major share of the strategic bombardment function now largely shouldered by the Strategic Air Command.

But there is also no doubt that the U-2 incident would appear to strengthen, not reduce, the importance of the piloted bomber for the next few years. Unarmed aircraft have penetrated by ones and twos deep into Russia, without utilizing radar-jamming or any of the other techniques which would assist actual bombing attacks. Even if the U-2 proves to have been knocked out of the skies at 65,000 feet by a Soviet rocket it is safe to conclude that the Soviet air defenses today could not possibly fend off a major assault by SAC.

Defense Problem

SAC would of course suffer losses, but the Soviet frontier is too large to be "airtight." Electronic counter-measures, saturation raids, low as well as high altitude attacks, the use of decoys and of air-to-ground missiles launched hundreds of miles from their target would certainly pose an insoluble problem for the Soviet air defense system. The old adage that 'some bombers always get through" is still true today and SAC is still a major deterrent to nuclear war.

*

How about our intelligence organization—does it need strengthening?

The answer, of course, is yes; any organization is susceptible of improvement. A secret intelligence organization like the CIA has such immense power that it should be carefully, though secretly, controlled by Congress. The suggestion that a Joint Congressional Committee should supervise the CIA has been shelved for this session of Congress but it has merit and should be restudied next January.

But the faults in connection with the U-2 case were not, to a major extent, intelligence faults.

Policy Difficulties

There may have been some problems owing to the multi-agency status of the project—the CIA, the Air Force and NASA. But the major problem appears to have been lack of coordination; the right hand of government did not seem to know what the left hand was doing. This is probably necessary to a large extent with secret intelligence, but some one at the top, probably the Operations Coordination Board, should have prevented the clumsy untruths which have hurt the credibility of the United States Government. Moreover, a policy anticipating exactly what did happen—the loss of a U-2 to the Russians — should have been formulated before the event, not hastily in moments of crisis.

*

What about the future? Will aerial reconnaissance be continued?

In some form or another aerial reconnaissance is here to stay. The U-2 may not fly again over Soviet territory, though this is by no means certain. But aerial patrol "along" the frontiers of the free world will certainly continue; the penalties of surprise attack are too great to permit any United States Government to discontinue such aerial watch-keeping.

NEED IS SEEN

Secrecy of Russians Is a Factor

And in time reconnaissance satellites will complement piloted aircraft. Already Tiros I, a weather satellite, is taking photographs of cloud cover over the world, including the Soviet Union and China. The Samos and Midas projects are reconnaissance and early warning satellites which in future years may provide complete "coverage" of the Eurasian heartland.

Satellites Ahead

Today adequate reconnaissance by satellite is not yet fully feasible. The definition of the photographs taken from space is not equal as yet to those taken by a high-flying plane, and—more important—the transmission of the photographs by electronic impulses from satellite to earth now results in a great loss of clarity But these are engineering problems which will be overcome. Aerial reconnaissance is here to stay.

*

What about our bases overseas?

The use of our allies' bases for the U-2 program has subjected them — particularly the smaller and weaker ones—to intense Soviet political and psychological pressure, which may increase if there is any evidence that these bases are used for the same purpose again. It is probable, however, that the purposes of the U-2 flights were not known to our allies. In any case, there are some bases under U. S. control—in Alaska, the Aleutians and Okinawa, for instance—which are not subject to such pressure.

There is no likelihood that the U-2 incident will lead to the loss of overseas rights by the United States, though it may lead to some curtailment of reconnaissance flights from those bases. But our allies are unlikely to cut off their noses to spite their faces. Continued U. S. strength abroad is to our allies' interest, even more than to the interest of the United States. We can, if necessary, fall back upon sea bases, or U. S. continental bases, but if we retire from Eurasia our friends are vulnerable to Communist pressures.